

**PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
MAY 16, 2023**

APPROVED: *Kend*



1. ROLL CALL

Chair Demi Chatters called the meeting to order. Commissioners in attendance: Charles Adkins, Michael Finch, Adam Yanasak, Michael Zelinski, Carly McGinn, McKenzie Sullivan, and Alex Lark.

Commissioner Absent: Kevin Ballard

Planning Staff: Yorik Stevens-Wajda, Becky McCrary, and Kathy Davis

Commissioner Adkins read a statement on Land Acknowledgement.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Commissioner Lark made a motion to approve the April 18, 2023, meeting minutes. Commissioner Zelinski seconded the motion.

Vote: Commissioner Lark, yes; Commissioner Sullivan, yes; Commissioner McGinn, abstain; Commissioner Zelinski, yes; Commissioner Yanasak, yes; Commissioner Finch, yes; Commissioner Adkins, yes; and Chair Chatters, yes.

Motion Carried.

3A. REPORTS OF MEMBERS AND COMMITTEES

Chair Chatters thanked Commissioner McGinn for her years of service as a Planning Commission member. Yorik Stevens-Wajda, Planning Director, presented a letter and certificate of appreciation to Commissioner McGinn for her years of service.

Commissioner Adkins attended the first in-person meeting of the Governor State Advisory Council on Homelessness as the youth representative on that board, where there was a presentation from the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development regarding the national homelessness strategy.

3B. STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Stevens-Wajda presented information on the housing development incentive program ordinances. City Council approved the system development and park impact fee waiver ordinances on May 3. The multiple family tax exemption amendment was approved on May 10 with an amendment that dropped the affordability threshold to 50% area median income for any extensions. The accessory dwelling unit code amendment would be considered at a future meeting for reconciliation with the recently passed state law. The comprehensive plan docket process deadline for the public to submit specific rezone and text amendments is June 12 at noon.

3C. OPEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

4A. PARK DISTRICT PLANNED DEVELOPMENT OVERLAY

Jason Morrow, Everett Housing Authority Development Director, introduced the design team who were working on the Park District project. Leslie Bayne with Framework, Ted Panton with GGLO, and Bob Bengford

with Makers. Mr. Morrow presented background information on their properties located in the Delta neighborhood. Ms. Bayne presented information on housing need and opportunity, equity and community building, and decarbonization. Mr. Panton presented information on the context and neighborhood connections, neighborhood retail and community-serving civic uses, and the network of open spaces as shown in the Parks District site plan. Mr. Bengford presented information on the next steps and schedule.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Adkins asked about live/work units. Ms. Bayne responded that those type of units weren't currently shown on the updated site plan but weren't off the table; however, live/work units tended to be challenging due to the trend of residents who work outside of their live-work unit.

Commissioner Yanasak appreciated the project design concept and asked about the number of units, the retail uses, and parking. Mr. Morrow responded that the proposed concept for the site addressed housing needs at all income levels, housing accessibility, and social connections throughout the site. Their strategic plan was to create development partnerships with the library, childcare and early education providers, and others to anchor the space in a way that will also attract retail. Ms. Bayne added that underground parking would be built in phases and provided throughout the site.

Commissioner Yanasak was concerned about the location of the development in an area that was not previously targeted for growth and concerned about the viability of the site to draw people that could help support some of the community resources and retail uses. Ms. Bayne responded that during COVID, the neighborhoods that thrived were those residential developments that were in proximity to community amenities. Their proposed concept was unique; however, the community would not be gated. The design of the site with the greenery at the edges was meant to invite people into the community to enjoy the amenities and shop at the retail uses.

Commissioner Zelinski stated that higher density would be constructed in an area that was historically lower density served by local streets and asked that the transportation consultant provide information at a future Planning Commission meeting about what mitigation measures were being introduced to address the increased traffic on streets that weren't accustomed to it.

Commissioner McGinn thanked the Everett Housing Authority for their presentation and all their work on the proposed project. This project will be an anchor. She added that a project like this could provide such a firm foundation for what the Everett community wanted and had the potential to be that and something more than anticipated.

Commissioner Lark agreed with Commissioner McGinn. He understood the concern around the traffic concerns; however, the quality of life that the car provides was just not what it used to be. He would encourage planning for traffic impacts but would prefer considerations given to provide more walkable and pedestrian friendly access to the site.

Commissioner Sullivan asked if any of the park areas would include a playground with restrooms. Ms. Bayne responded that there were some targeted areas planned for kid spaces. She pointed out those areas on the site plan.

Commissioner Finch stated that the Everett Housing Authority was working with an impressive group of professionals where several million dollars had been spent getting to this point. He asked if this was considered best practice not only for urban design but also for affordable housing. Ms. Bayne responded that so much of the housing that's provided in the region was based on the market and smaller sites. The Everett Housing Authority as an organization was different than the market developer. The Everett Housing Authority can build more than just housing but neighborhoods, which was not only best practice, but an exciting opportunity.

Commissioner Finch asked about home ownership opportunities. Mr. Morrow responded that in terms of condominiums, the housing authority was advised by their legal counsel or other advisors not to consider. Commissioner Finch asked about the resident composition. Mr. Morrow responded a mix of income levels. Commissioner Finch asked for some perspectives that show the true scale of the taller buildings, including the shadows they cast when the Everett Housing Authority comes back to a future Planning Commission meeting. He would also like more information regarding parking on the site. He asked about a grocery store. Ms. Bayne responded that the grocery store that they had considered for the site wasn't interested; however, they would like to include that type of use on the site. Commissioner Finch suggested a shuttle service.

Commissioner Adkins encouraged the Everett Housing Authority team to keep on thinking innovatively and thinking differently. He stated that communities and projects like the one proposed were very much a part of Everett's future. This project would provide residents access to services creating a more walkable and transit friendly community. There was a need for more housing to absorb Everett's future growth. Everett needed to fundamentally change and resize as a city.

Commissioner Lark agreed with Commissioner Adkins and added that Everett was competing in a global market for resources, for talent, for opportunity, and for innovation. Provisions for housing at all income levels, allows residents to spend money in the local economy, to buy amenities, to purchase things which help to drive Everett's economy forward. He stated that it created opportunities for people to start businesses and created an ecosystem to drive Everett forward. He considered the proposed project as an anchor, not a model.

Commissioner Finch was concerned that the project would create an economic island. Mr. Morrow responded that the Everett Housing Authority was taking the initiative to use their existing acreage and the energy that they have and the intellectual leadership they have of the consultants and the team to use the proposed project as a model for how they start a movement towards deeper and more social engagement housing. The creation of other similar communities in the area creates synergy between those communities.

Commissioner Sullivan considered the proposed project as an anchor and that it was a cool project, one that she would like to see in her Silver Lake neighborhood.

Chair Chatters referred to the vibrancy of the Mill Creek Town Center and she supported the proposed project in its most ambitious form. She agreed with Commissioner Sullivan and Commissioner McGinn's point about emotional real estate, that it mattered how a resident felt about the community and environment they live in. She stated that the proposed project was a very thoughtful design, thoughtful project, respected the housing needs aesthetically in terms of artistry of the area surrounding the community.

Commissioner Yanasak asked about the retail uses on the site. He asked if they would be sustainable businesses that would attract and help build that community. Ms. Bayne responded that they were working with retail advisors on the project because they wanted to make sure that the retail uses would be sustainable. Commissioner Yanasak asked if the Everett Housing Authority would also manage the retail uses on the site. He would like to hear more about what the plan was to avoid vacant retail and commercial buildings located on this site.

Chair Chatters stated that the attention paid to deliberately creating spaces of community, connectivity, and social connectivity were important to the safety of the community and was a necessary element.

Public Comments:

Ismail Mohammed, 3731 Colby Avenue, stated that he was a local small developer in Everett. He appreciated the presentation on the Park District. He commented that the project was exciting and added that with the investment and time, the project could not go wrong.

Sonja Bodge, Delta Neighborhood Association Commissioner, stated that she had provided comments to the traffic engineer last year about access from Bakerview regarding residents with mobility issues going to Safeway. She expressed some of the neighborhood concerns which included heights, amenities for after school children, parking, vacant retail uses, and public safety.

4B. EVERETT 2044: GROWTH ALTERNATIVES BRIEFING CONTINUED

Rebecca McCrary, Long Range Planning Manager, presented information on the statutory requirements, continuation of draft alternatives key questions, growth geography maps, housing typologies, growth alternative goals, draft growth alternative maps, and next steps.

Commissioner Yanasak referred to the recent change in legislation and asked if those updates were already incorporated into alternative 1. Ms. McCrary responded that neither alternative 1 or 2 address the new legislation; however, the two alternatives provided a baseline to evaluate different ways of growth. Mr. Stevens-Wajda added that there could be some mixing and matching between the two alternatives in the development of the preferred alternative.

Commissioner Finch commented that two of the three alternatives were not legally possible due to the new legislation and asked if staff would like to end up with the third alternative as the preferred alternative. Ms. McCrary responded that the preferred alternative could be some mixing and matching between the alternatives. Mr. Stevens-Wajda stated that the alternatives were like conversation starters and there was a

year and a half and a little bit more time than that to come up with a preferred alternative using these conversation starters and other considerations from the very local to best practices.

Citizen Comments

None

Mr. Stevens-Wajda stated that given the time, he suggested continuing the legislative update item to a future meeting and to move forward with Agenda 5B on Middle Housing. Chair Chatters agreed.

5B. EVERETT 2044: MIDDLE HOUSING

Joe Tovar, Washington State Department of Commerce, presented information on the middle housing grant program status and tools for cities.

Chair Chatters asked Commissioners, given the late hour, if they would like to schedule a supplemental meeting in two weeks to continue working through the agenda. Commissioners agreed.

Citizen Comments

None

ADJOURNED 8:58 PM



Planning Commission Secretary

6/6/22

Date



Administrative Coordinator

6-6-2023

Date

